

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3190

USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

INFO AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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STATE FOR CU

E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT: ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONAL CONFERENCE

REF: STATE 210434 (NOTAL)

1. THE ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN STUDIES AT FUJINOMIYA, JAPAN SEPT. 4 TO 7 WAS AN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS IN EVERY WAY, EXCEEDING THE HIGHEST EXPECTATIONS OF THE JAPANESE SPONSORS AND AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS. THE LEVEL OF INTELLECTUAL DEBATE AND QUALITY OF PARTICIPANTS WAS UNIFORMLY HIGH. THE ATMOSPHERE OF COMRADESHIP
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BETWEEN JAPANESE, OTHER ASIANS, AND WESTERNERS WAS FOSTERED BY GENEROUS JAPANESE HOSPITALITY, AN ISOLATED AND BEAUTIFUL LOCATION, AND A DISCOVERY OF A SHARED COMMUNITY IN A COMMON PROFESSION WHICH HAS NOT BEEN WIDELY CONSIDERED

IN MANY COUNTRIES AS FULLY RESPECTABLE. AS ONE JAPANESE PUT IT, "WE HAVE BEEN SECOND-RATE ACADEMICS AND SECOND LEVEL CITIZENS IN OUR COUNTRIES" BECAUSE WE CANNOT COMPETE WITH THE AMERICANS IN THEIR OWN FIELD, AND BECAUSE WE ARE SEEN BY OUR COUNTRYMEN AS TOO PRO-AMERICAN. THE DISCOVERY AMONG THEMSELVES THAT THERE WERE SUCH INTELLECTUAL COLLEAGUES IN OTHER ASIAN COUNTRIES, PLUS THE PRESENCE OF EUROPEAN OBSERVERS, CONTRIBUTED TO THE FEELING OF BEING PART OF A RESPECTED AND WORLDWIDE PROFESSION.

2. AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS SET JUST THE RIGHT TONE IN RELATION TO ASIAN CONCERNS ABOUT BOTH THEIR OWN COMPETENCE AND THEIR RIGHT TO INDEPENDENCE FROM DOMINATION BY AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP. THERE WAS WIDE RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF CROSS-CULTURAL STUDIES AS A CONTRIBUTION WHICH ASIANS COULD MAKE BOTH TO THE BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF AMERICA AND TO UNDERSTANDING THEIR OWN CULTURES. DISCUSSIONS ON AMERICAN STUDIES, COUNTRY BY COUNTRY, FOCUSED ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND INTELLECTUAL PROBLEMS RATHER THAN FINANCIAL AND BUREAUCRATIC. THIS WAS APPROPRIATE FOR THIS FORUM, SINCE CONDITIONS AND EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURE ARE SO DIFFERENT, COUNTRY BY COUNTRY.

3. THERE WAS AN EFFORT BY THE ASIANS TO STATE THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION IN THE CONTEXT OF WORLD HISTORY AND OF THE EXPANSION OF THE WEST, RATHER THAN IN THE INTERNAL EUROPEAN CONTEXT OF REVOLT AGAINST BRITAIN. THE AUSTRALIANS PROVIDED ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE, CONTRASTING THE BLOODY NATURE OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION WITH THE PEACEFUL ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SAME RESULTS BY AUSTRALIA AND OTHER FORMER BRITISH COLONIES.

4. WHILE THERE WERE REPEATED REFERENCES TO A "DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE" BY ASIAN AND PACIFIC SCHOLARS OF AMERICA, THESE WERE OFTEN HUMOROUS AND ALWAYS FRIENDLY. BOTH AMERICAN AND FOREIGN PARTICIPANTS STRESSED MUTUAL UNCLASSIFIED

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INTER INDEPENDENCE AND THE RECOGNITION THAT ANY REGIONAL OR WORLD GROUPINGS OF AMERICAN STUDIES SCHOLARLY ASSOCIATIONS MUST NOT BE DOMINATED BY THE AMERICANS, EVEN THOUGH THE U.S. HAS THE LARGEST PROFESSION IN THIS FIELD.

5. EFFECT OF THE CONFERENCE WAS CLEARLY PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL MORE THAN SPECIFIC AND PROGRAMMATIC. PRECISELY SCHEDULED MEETINGS NEVER ALLOWED TIME TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THE MANY THEMES RAISED JUST AS DISCUSSIONS WERE BECOMING EXCITING. THERE WERE MANY PROFESSIONS OF INTENT TO KEEP IN TOUCH, HOWEVER. AUSTRALIA-NEW ZEALAND INVITED TWO JAPANESE

PARTICIPANTS TO THEIR NEXT CONFERENCE, FOR EXAMPLE. THERE WERE ALMOST UNIVERSAL EXPRESSIONS THAT THE ASIAN-PACIFIC CONFERENCE SHOULD BE REGULARLY REPEATED, PERHAPS EVERY THREE YEARS. A WORLD CONFERENCE OR WORLD ORGANIZATION OF AMERICANISTS WAS A BIT BEYOND THE HORIZON OF THE DISCUSSIONS, BUT THE PARTICIPANTS CLEARLY DISCOVERED A COMMUNITY OF INTERESTS IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD.

6. AMERICAN DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS MADE SUBSTANTIVE CONTRIBUTION TOWARD PROMOTION OF AMERICAN STUDIES THROUGH THEIR OFFICIAL PARTICIPATION AND THROUGH EXTENSIVE PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS WITH DELEGATES FROM 12 OTHER EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC NATIONS. OVERALL IMPRESSION LEFT BY AMERICAN DELEGATION WAS SUPERB AND THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS SHOULD BE LONG LASTING. IN ADDITION EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC, TWO OBSERVERS ATTENDED FROM EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE, ONE FROM NEAR EAST-NORTH AFRICA, AND ONE FROM NEW WORLD.

7. DELEGATES FROM EACH PARTICIPATING NATION, MANY OF WHOSE INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL WAS FINANCED BY ADDRESSEE POSTS, TOOK ACTIVE PART IN FORMAL DELIBERATIONS AND USED FREE TIME AT CONFERENCE SITE TO DISCUSS OWN SPECIAL PROBLEMS INFORMALLY WITH OTHER DELEGATES. CROSS CULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS WERE EXTENSIVE AND INTENSIVE. WHILE SOME DELEGATES WERE MORE OUTSPOKEN THAN OTHERS ON CONFERENCE FLOOR, QUALITY OF PAPERS PRESENTED AND REMARKS DURING DEBATES, PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS GAVE AMERICANS PRESENT FEELING THAT CHOICES MADE UNCLASSIFIED

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IN EACH CASE WERE OUTSTANDING. USIS CONTACT WITH VISITING DELEGATES INDICATED DEEP AND ABIDING PROFESSIONAL INTEREST IN IMPROVING AMERICAN STUDIES AT THEIR RESPECTIVE INSTITUTIONS.

8. JAPANESE HOSTS RAN CONFERENCE WITH FIRM BUT GENTLE HAND TO EXTRACT MAXIMUM POSSIBLE FROM TIME AVAILABLE. TRADITIONAL JAPANESE HOSPITALITY UNSURPASSED WITH HOSTS PROVIDING IN-COUNTRY TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING (ADEQUATE), FOOD (EXCELLENT), AND DRINKS (FREE AND UNLIMITED) FOR DURATION OF CONFERENCE, JAPANESE GRADUATE STUDENTS IN AMERICAN STUDIES PERFORMED MAJORITY OF STAFF WORK FREE IN EXCHANGE FOR PRIVILEGE OF ATTENDING CONFERENCE DEBATES. SITE WAS CAMPUS INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND TRAINING AT FUJINOMIYA LOCATED AT BASE OF MOUNT FUJI. ISOLATION OF INSTITUTE MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR DELEGATES TO

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R 110505Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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USIA WASHDC

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DEVOTE THEIR EVERY WAKING MOMENT TO DISCUSSING
AMERICAN STUDIES AND THAT IS INDEED WHAT HAPPENED.

9. AMONG AMERICAN DELEGATES OUTSTANDING PERSONALITIES
WERE HARVARD'S BERNARD BAILYN, YALE'S NORMAN PEARSON
AND SUNY'S LAWRENCE CHISHOLM. EVEN SO, BAILYN PROVED
TO BE BY FAR MOST IMPRESSIVE IN BOTH CONTENT AND STYLE
OF HIS REMARKS. HIS OPENING SYMPOSIUM REMAKS ON
"ORIGINS AND CHARACTER OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION: AN
INTERPRETATION," DELIVERED LARGELY EXTEMPORANEOUSLY,
WAS QUOTED THROUGHOUT CONFERENCE. HIS CONCLUDING
STATEMENT HELPED SET THE THEME FOR MUCH OF THE DEBATE.
IT WAS: "A QUESTION FOR OTHER NATIONS AS THEY EXAMINE
AMERICA'S REVOLUTIONARY EXPERIENCE IS, WHAT IS THERE
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IN THIS 18TH-CENTURY ANGLO AMERICAN REVOLUTION,
APPARENTLY SO LOCAL AND UNIQUE IN ITS ORIGINS AND
CHARACTER, THAT CAN BE USEFUL IN OTHER CULTURES, OTHER
TIMES, AND OTHER SOCIO-POLITICAL SYSTEMS." PEARSON,
GRAND OLD MAN OF AMERICAN STUDIES--WITH APPROPRIATE
APOLOGIES--CHALLENGED PARTICIPANTS TO STUDY AMERICAN
SOCIO-HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE FROM THEIR OWN PARTICULAR

VIEWPOINTS AND DECLARE THEIR INDEPENDENCE FROM FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS. CHISHOLM, SPEAKING AS AN OBSERVER, HELPED GIVE CONFERES A STRONG SENSE OF THE PLURALISTIC AMERICAN SOCIETY.

10. GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY'S ROBERT WALKER CALLED ON DELEGATES TO FORM WORLD WIDE CONFEDERATION OF AMERICAN STUDIES AND CIRCULATED A DRAFT CONSTITUTION WHICH WAS NOT ACTED UPON FORMALLY BUT MAY BE CONSIDERED AT OTHER REGIONAL CONFERENCES AND WORLD CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON IN 1976.

11. AT END OF CONFERENCE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND DELEGATES INVITED BERNARD BAILYN TO VISIT THEIR UNIVERSITIES DURING JULY-AUGUST 1976. THE INDONESIAN DELEGATES ASKED FOR HIM DURING SAME TIME FRAME FOR CONFERENCE ON AMERICAN STUDIES. OTHER DELEGATIONS, WITHOUT SPECIFYING NAMES, ASKED THE USIS PRO'S ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING VISITING AMERICAN STUDIES SPECIALISTS FOR THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES.

12. USIS RPO AND DPAO TENNY WHO ATTENDED CONFERENCE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT BAILYN BE OFFERED AMERICAN SPECIALIST GRANT TO TRAVEL IN EAST ASIA DURING JULY-AUGUST, 1976, STARTING WITH AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND AND WORKING NORTHWARD. THOUGH RELUCTANT EARLY IN CONFERENCE TO UNDERTAKE SUCH A PROGRAM, AT END HE EXPRESSED ENTHUSIASM OVER POSSIBILITY. BAILYN SAID HE HAS ONLY ONE COMMITMENT IN LONDON AT END OF JUNE AND WOULD BE FREE THEREAFTER. (INTERESTED POSTS SHOULD SEE WHO'S WHO IN AMERICA FOR BAILYN BIOGRAPHY.) HIS PRINCIPAL CONDITION IS THAT HE TAKE HIS WIFE ALONG. AS PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY AT MIT MRS. BAILYN COULD POSSIBLY BE PROGRAMMED AS VOLUNTEER SPEAKER.
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13. PROF. ELAINE BARRY, ORGANIZER FOR AUSTRALIAN-NEW ZEALAND AMSTUDIES ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE AUGUST 16-19, 1976, SAID BROWN UNIVERSITY HISTORIAN GORDON WOOD (FORMER STUDENT OF BAILYN) AND CCNY PROF ALFRED KAZIN HAVE ALREADY BEEN INVITED TO PARTICIPATE, AS HAS NOTED LITERARY CRITIC ANTHONY TANNER OF ENGLAND'S CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY. DURING FUJINOMIYA A-NZ DELEGATION ALSO EXTENDED INVITATION TO JAPANESE AMERICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION TO SEND TWO AMERICAN STUDIES SPECIALISTS TO THE CONFERENCE. NOTE: SINCE WOOD ALREADY INVITED TO CONFERENCE GROUP PREFERS TO HAIC BAILYN VISIT UNIVERSITIES WHERE HIS TALENTS CAN BE MORE WIDELY USED.

14. PROF. NORMAN PEARSON WAS OFFERED DOLLARS 750 AUSTRALIAN TRAVEL GRANT FROM MONASH UNIVERSITY TO ATTEND A-NZ AMERICAN STUDIES CONFERENCE. PEARSON DESIRES

ACCEPT AND WILL LEKELY APPROACH CU FOR ADDITIONAL TRAVEL ASSISTANCE. HE ALSO INTERESTED PARTICIPATING IN INDONESIA AMERICAN STUDIES CONFERENCE.

15. FROM FOREGOING OBVIOUS FUJINOMIYA CONFERENCE AMERICAN STUDIES SPECIALISTS STIMULATED TREMENDOUS ENTHUSIASM. RETURNING DELEGATES CAN BE EXPECTED TO PUT THIS ENTHUSIASM TO WORK AND, DESPITE PROF. PEARSON'S ADMONITION TO DECLARE THEIR INDEPENDENCE, WILL LIKELY CALL ON USIS FOR ASSISTANCE. CONFIRMED AND POTENTIAL AMERICAN STUDIES SPECIALISTS VISITING AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND DURING BICENTENNIAL YEAR SHOULD PROVIDE FUND OF TALENT UPON WHICH AGENCY, CU, AND ADDRESSEE POSTS CAN DRAW.
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